

I am deeply concerned about proposed rule changes that would require individuals like myself who travel with a service dog to be potentially compelled to purchase an additional seat at the whim of the airline.

I have a large service dog who weights 78 lbs. She must travel with me for bona fide medical reasons. While she can occupy the space in front of a first class seat, even tightly curled up, she encroaches into the adjacent seat's foot space. Typically people are most understanding about service dogs and I have personally not had any unpleasant confrontations.

I feel that the proposed rule changes shift the burden of accomodation to the disabled person in terms of cost and inconvenience. Traveling with a disability is quite challenging as it is without worrying about what surprises lie in store at the ticket counter by the airline. Many disabled people like myself live on fixed incomes. When I plan to travel I budget carefully in advance for the trip and would face serious hardship were I compelled to purchase an additional ticket at the last minute.

I would like to see the rules for reasonable accomodation applying to the airline industry adopt language similar to that of the Americans with Disabilities Act. That statute requires business to make accomodations even if some expenditures are necessary. Forfeiting a seat to accomodate a service dog if another passenger refuses to occupy the seat adjacent to it seems on par the financial outlay of refitting restrooms to accomodate wheelchairs or installing ramps so stairs can be circumvented.

I respectfully thank you for considering my points as you comtemplate these rule changes.